The applications received in the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs will be examined by an internal committee consisting of a legal advisor and an officer of the rank of Director/ Deputy Secretary and approved by Secretary. Thereafter, the Ministry will recommend the case of Mission concerned to provide legal aid support. The applicant would also be informed to approach the Mission concerned in this regard.

Application for Hague Convention

1480. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has applied to be a signatory in the Hague Convention;

(b) if so, the status of the application; and

(c) **if** not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) **to** (c) India is a party to the following Hague Conventions:

1. Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents.
2. Convention of 15 November 1965 on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extrajudicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters.
3. Convention of 18 March 1970 on the Taking of Evidence Abroad in Civil or Commercial Matters.
4. Convention of 29 May 1993 on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Inter Country Adoption.

However, India is not yet a Member of the Hague Conference. Its request for it has been approved by the member states of the Hague Conference under the provisions of the Statute of the Hague Conference. India's Instrument of Accession has been forwarded to the Indian Embassy at the Hague for deposit with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Opening of Facilitation Centres

1481. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has opened/running facilitation Centres for the Peoples' of Indian Origin (PIO);

(b) if so, the details thereof showing the number of such centres, its locations, activities and functions etc.; and

(c) if not, whether Government is proposing/planning to open such centres and by when and the various locations where it is to be opened?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (c) Minisry of Overseas Indian Affairs has set up an Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC) as a not-for-profit Trust under the Indian Trust Act, 1982, in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), for serving the interests of overseas Indians.